

Meeting Notes
U.S.-China Phytosanitary Bilateral
September 15-19, 2003
Bethesda, MD

Alaska Seed Potatoes: Agreement was reached to finalize a protocol authorizing the exportation of Alaska-origin seed potatoes to China. During the protocol deliberations there was a significant discussion about permitting procedures used by APHIS and AQSIQ. Both sides agreed to work toward establishment of user friendly and equivalent import permitting procedures.

APHIS Associate Administrator Peter Fernandez and AQSIQ Director General Xia Hongmin signed a formal Memorandum for the Signing of Phytosanitary Protocols and Work Plans on September 23, 2003. Therefore, export shipments of Alaska-origin seed potatoes are now authorized in accordance with the existing finalized text. The formal signing of the finalized phytosanitary protocol for Alaska-origin seed potato exports to China will likely occur later this year during Premier Wen Jiabao's scheduled visit to the United States.

Alaska Table Stock Potatoes: AQSIQ agreed to make finalization of the import protocol for Alaska-origin table stock potatoes a high priority. The PRA will be based on information already received for Alaska-origin seed potatoes. AQSIQ indicated that specific issues associated with the use of sprout inhibitors needed to be addressed with regard to imports of table stock potatoes from Alaska. APHIS concurred and encouraged AQSIQ to provide APHIS with copies of the PRA and draft protocol for review. AQSIQ agreed to complete the PRA and provide APHIS with a draft protocol as soon as possible.

Pacific Northwest (ID, OR, & WA) Table Stock Potatoes: In August 2003, APHIS presented AQSIQ with a draft operational work plan that outlines how Pacific Northwest-origin table stock potatoes could be shipped to China under phytosanitary secure conditions. AQSIQ is currently in the process of reviewing the technical information provided by APHIS for U.S. table stock potatoes from ID, OR, and WA. AQSIQ will use this information to update and complete the required PRA. APHIS encouraged AQSIQ to give this issue a high priority. AQSIQ stated that completion of the PRA on Pacific Northwest-origin table stock potatoes was a high priority and that every effort would be given to complete the PRA as soon as possible.

Chinese-Origin Longans: Agreement was reached to finalize a work plan that authorizes importation of Chinese-origin longans into the United States. APHIS Associate Administrator Peter Fernandez and AQSIQ Director General Xia Hongmin signed a formal Memorandum for the Signing of Phytosanitary Protocols and Work Plans on September 23, 2003. Therefore, APHIS can now issue permits to authorize imported shipments of Chinese-origin longans in accordance with the existing finalized text. The formal signing of the finalized phytosanitary work plan for imported Chinese-origin longans will occur later this year during Premier Wen Jiabao's scheduled visit to the United States.

Chinese-Origin Penjing: APHIS provided AQSIQ with a preliminary draft work plan that outlines the tentative operational parameters to import five species of Chinese-origin penjing plants in growing media. AQSIQ will review the draft work plan and will work with APHIS to finalize the work plan after publication of the final rule that will authorize importation of five species of Chinese-origin penjing plants in growing media into the United States.

U.S.-Origin Stone Fruit: AQSIQ provided APHIS with a final Chinese-language PRA for U.S.-origin plums. AQSIQ indicated that the pest list included with the PRA was final. The AQSIQ pest list included fire blight. APHIS reiterated that there was no phytosanitary justification for concern about fire blight in imported commercial U.S.-origin plum fruit. However, APHIS agreed to review the literature citations noted in the Chinese PRA regarding plum fruit and its host status for fire blight and provide AQSIQ with formal written comments. The APHIS-IS office in Beijing will translate the Chinese-language PRA into English for APHIS review and comment.

Chinese-Origin Ya Pears: APHIS and AQSIQ discussed provisions to update and renegotiate the work plan that authorizes importation of Chinese-origin Ya pears from Hebei and Shandong Provinces. Significant discussions focused on *Alternaria* spp. and the need for cooperative scientific research in this area. Both sides agreed to work together on this issue, and the U.S. shared a list of research needs and a draft of the Terms of Cooperation, which outlined how APHIS and AQSIQ could cooperate on the scientific research regarding *Alternaria* spp. China agreed to provide comments to APHIS regarding these two documents. The results of this collaborative study will influence future changes to this work plan. Additionally, there were significant discussions about potential sanctions if *Alternaria* spp. continued to be intercepted in shipments of Chinese-origin Ya pears arriving in the United States. Interim sanctions for detections of *Alternaria* spp. were discussed at length and ultimately agreed to.

APHIS Associate Administrator Peter Fernandez and AQSIQ Director General Xia Hongmin signed a formal Memorandum for the Signing of Phytosanitary Protocols and Work Plans on September 23, 2003. Therefore, APHIS can now issue permits to authorize imported shipments of Chinese-origin Ya pears accordance with the existing draft text subject to minor wording changes that will be finalized through written correspondence. The formal signing of the finalized phytosanitary work plan for imported Chinese-origin Ya pears from Hebei and Shandong Provinces China will occur later this year during Premier Wen Jiabao's scheduled visit to the United States.

Chinese-Origin Fragrant Pears: APHIS provided AQSIQ with a preliminary draft work plan that outlines operational parameters for importation of Chinese-origin fragrant pears. AQSIQ will review the draft work plan and will work with APHIS to finalize the work plan after publication of the final rule that would authorize importation of Chinese-origin fragrant pears into the United States.

Chinese-Origin Apples and Citrus: APHIS reported that the PRA process to evaluate pest risks associated with China's market access requests to ship fresh apples and citrus to the United States had been initiated. Additionally, APHIS reported that the PRA for Chinese-origin apples was further along in development than the PRA for Chinese-origin citrus. APHIS requested additional pest information for plant pests associated with Chinese-origin apples. Additional pest information is required to ensure all potential pest pathways are thoroughly addressed. APHIS agreed to provide the current pest list to AQSIQ for review and update. AQSIQ will subsequently provide APHIS with comments on the pest list.

Florida Citrus: AQSIQ confirmed that they received updated technical information for citrus produced and packed in the Florida counties of Charlotte, Orange, Pasco, and Polk. APHIS again requested that these four Florida counties be included in the current work plan that authorizes shipment of fresh citrus from 11 Florida counties. It was reiterated that citrus pest issues in Charlotte, Orange, Pasco, and Polk counties are identical to those for Florida counties that have already been approved by AQSIQ to ship fresh citrus to China. Therefore, there is no justification for an additional PRA as requested by China. AQSIQ indicated that the updated technical information will be evaluated and APHIS would be provided with a final decision regarding incorporation of Charlotte, Orange, Pasco, and Polk counties into the existing work plan.

Harmonization of Fruit Fly Trapping: AQSIQ and APHIS agreed, in principle, to accept their respective fruit fly trapping protocols. AQSIQ representatives confirmed their support to remove a fruit fly trapping requirement for Medfly. However, AQSIQ stated that there was a domestic legal process that had to be completed before the existing work plan could be changed. Additionally, APHIS agreed to remove fruit fly trapping requirements for imported Chinese-origin longans, and would also consider eliminating fruit fly trapping requirement from the Ya pear and fragrant pear work plans upon notification of a favorable decision by AQSIQ. Additionally, APHIS provided AQSIQ with draft addendums to the citrus and grape protocols. These draft addendums propose that existing AQSIQ requirements for Medfly trapping be modified to eliminate the need for additional trapping. Finally, APHIS proposed that current requirements for maintenance of grower/shipper lists for work plan commodities be eliminated. APHIS stated that each NPPO would keep their respective lists for trace-back purposes. AQSIQ stated that, in principle, they agreed but could only take this approach for low risk (non work plan) commodities.

Chinese-Origin Stone Fruit: AQSIQ provided APHIS with a formal market access request for Chinese-origin stone fruit. The market access request is currently being translated into English.